

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the subject application. The Advisory Action of March 24, 2004 and final Office Action of December 9, 2003 have been received and contents carefully reviewed. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matters in claims 1-13, 17-19, 27, 29-40, 42, 44 and 46-48.

By this Amendment, Applicants cancel claims 22, 24, 25, 41 and 45 without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims, claims 1-13, 17-19, 27, 29-40, 42, 44 and 46-48, are in condition for immediate allowance.

Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner deems that a telephone conference would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number (202) 496 - 7500. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

Respectfully submitted,

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